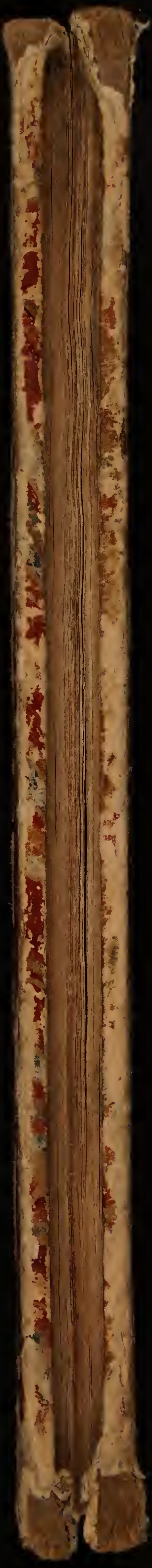

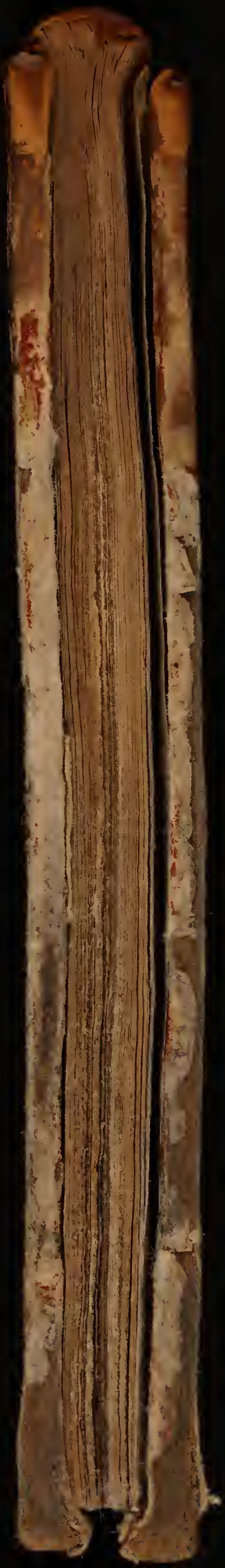

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A
LETTER

In *ANSWER* to certain *Quæries* and *Objections* made by a Learned GALENIST, againſt the *Theorie* and *Practice* of *Chymical Phyſick*.

Wherein the right Method of Curing of *Diſeaſes* is Demonſtrated : The poſſibility of an *Univerſal Medicine* evinced ;

AND

CHYMICAL PHYSICK Vindicated.

By

GEORGE ACTON Doctor of Phyſick.

Publiſhed for the benefit of ſuch as languiſh under any grievous Diſtemper without Cure.

LONDON,
Printed by *William Godbid* for *Walter Kettleby*, at the Sign of the *Biſhops Head* in *Duck-Lane*. 1670.

SIR,

HAD you not power enough with me to perſwade me for your ſatisfaction, to neglect my own, I ſhould ſcarcely at this time have comply'd with your deſires, in anſwering your ſeveral *Queries* and *Objections* againſt both the Theorie and Practice of *Chymical Phyſick*; for I find almoſt all the *Galeniſts* that are either totally ignorant of *Chymiſtry*, or acquainted only with the Vulgar; ſuch as is that of *Crollius*, *Hartman*, *Beguin*, and their like, ſo riged oppoſers of the more occult Philoſophy of *Hermes*, *Raymond*, *Lully*, *Baſilius Valentinus*, *Paracelſus*, *Vanhelmont*, &c. that they cannot but proteſt againſt all their Schollars and followers, as *Heterodox*, deſerters of the Schools, and (to uſe your own expreſſion) Phanaticks and Canters of ſuch a Philoſophy, that were *Galen* himſelf again living upon Earth, he would not be able to underſtand it; and although for your own part I have no reaſon to believe you of the number of thoſe ſupercilious Opiners, that ſcorn to forſake an Errour becauſe vulgarly received; yet I doubt whether the Truth in ſo plain a dreſs as I ſhall expoſe it, may not ſtartle you alſo. You are perhaps too tender of the Reputation of *Galen*; for you ought not to think it any diſcredit to him, that had never ſeen ſo much as common Diſtillation in his life, to be ſaid not to underſtand the profound and hidden Myſteries of Natural Phyloſophy, plunged in an Abyſs inacceſſible and imperceivable by any poſſibility of Witt, without the help of Fire; He well ſaw that the tenuous and æthereal ſubſtance of things, was of greater efficacy than their groſſer part, as he confeſſeth in his 11 Book *De Simp. Med. Facul. Quæ tenuium ſunt partium, iis quæ ſunt craſſarum plus habent efficaciæ etiamſi parem ſortita fuerint facultatem, nimirum quia melius penitrent*; but he knew not how to ſeparate the tenuous parts from the implication of the groſs, which we do by the help of Fire. Whence I conclude, that he (had he underſtood

the Art of Chymiſtry, which in his time lay hid in obſcure Hieroglyphicks in the Shrines of *Ægypt*, would have left us both his Phyſiology, Pathology, and eſpecially his Method of Healing, quite different from what it is; for it cannot reaſonably be imagined, that ſo curious a ſearcher into the hidden things of Nature, would have contented himſelf with a bare rational Analyſis of Bodies exiſting only in the Underſtanding, had he been acquainted with the Encheiretick, reſolving all bodies into Principles ſubject to Senſe, and fit for the uſe and manual operation of a skilful Phyſician by the help of Fire. Your Ideal Analyſis, by a progreſſive agitation of the Mind, by which you find contemplation to end where natural compoſition begins, leads you at laſt but into the dark Chaos of the Elements, and there begets but this unprofitable concluſion; *That becauſe all things are by a mental Reſoluſion ultimately reſolv'd into the four Elements, therefore theſe are the common Principles of all things.* Now how much it may really improve any mans underſtanding in the Art of Phyſick, to tell him all things are compounded of the four Elements, more than in Ship-Carpentry, to tell him a Ship is made of Timber, Iron, Hemp, and Tarr, I leave you to judge. We therefore, (in regard the Elements are but remote Principles upon which only God and Nature can work) have by the Reſolution of Fire found out nearer Principles ſubject (as I ſaid) to Senſe, and fit for the uſe of a Spagyrical Phyſician: theſe are *Mercury*, *Sulphur*, and *Salt*, which being firſt ſeparated and cleanſed from all heterogeneous feculency, then exalted (by the help of Fire) in power and virtue, we can either uſe them ſeverally, or conjunctly, according to their virtues, and the curative intention of the Phyſician; And thus by the help of Fire, we make Medicines eaſily curing thoſe obſtinate Diſeaſes you eſteem incurable; By the help of Fire we underſtand the occult Hermetick and Helmontian Philoſophy; and by the help of Fire, with much ſtudy, labour, and ſweat (never by the bare reading of Books at your eaſe) may you alſo be ſatisfyed of the reality, truth, and excellence of that Phyſick which you now profeſs (and I believe you) no more to underſtand, than the Cantings of *Gipſies*. But now to your firſt *Quærie*:

Whether

Whether it be possible to cure a Disease without a Remedy contrary to the Disease, or at least to its Cause?

I answer with the *Adepti* in the affirmative, and say, *Nulla fit sanatio per contraria, quia Morbus proximè & primariò consistit in Archéo at substantiæ in esse* (according to *Aristotle*) *nihil est contrarium.* It is not the corporeal substance of the Brain, Heart, Liver, Spleen, *&c.* that suffers primarily, *& per se* in their several distempers, though Idiopathical, but the Jusitous Spirit governing the part, and disposing it to perform all natural, Vital, and Animal Functions, which being hurt by the Errour and depravation of the Jusluous Spirit and Topick Ferment, the part necessarily suffers by accident, *Quia actio terminatur in corpus.* Now the atonie of the Jusluous Spirit and deviation of Ferments happens by ill air, Contagion, Malignant Influence, poisonous Fumes or Odours inspir'd, or entring by the Pores, by Meat or Drink hurtful either in quality or quantity, by Poison or Virulency of ill Physick, by natural or accidental inequality of strength, by retention of Excrements of the several digestions, by transmission from one digestion to another, before a perfect Concoction in the former, *&c.* So then the right Method of curing Diseases, is primarily by pacation of the Enormontick Spirit, and extinction of Morbifick Idea's, and but *à posteriori*, by expelling the peccant matter generated by the ataxie of the Spirit: But such a sedation of the Spirit cannot possibly be procured by contraries; does not Fire burn most vehemently, when constring'd by an extreme cold of the ambient? and hot water sooner extinguish Fire than cold, because sooner penetrating its Pores? I could multiply arguments against the Method of curing Diseases by contrary Remedies; but my design is rather to recreate than tire you with too long a Letter.

To your next *Quærie*, therefore; *Whether we acknowledge four Humours*; and if so, *Whether various Distempers flowing from the depravation or excess of various Humours*, *as* Synochus simplex, *of too much abundance of Blood*; Quotidiana Intermittens, *of Flegm*; Tertiana Intermittens, *of Choler*; Quartana Intermittens, *of Melancholy*; *all putrifying in the first region of the Body*;

Body; and both Quotidian, Tertian, and Quartan, continual from the ſame humours putrefying in the Vein, may be all cured by one Medicine?

In anſwer to this; Firſt, We deny your *Humours*, as moſt repugnant to reaſon, that under one act of Sanguification, and in the ſame Veſſels, four different *Humours* ſhould be produc'd, and that naturally in ſound and healthful Bodies theſe Humours ſhould be the efficient cauſes of future Diſeaſes; For this were to ſuppoſe Nature always to erre, *etiam in ſuis finibus.* Senſe likewiſe aſſures us, that although there be a Liquor ſwimming upon Blood, emitted and cold, of a yellow colour, yet that it is not therefore yellow Bile; for that it is not bitter to the taſte: And though the *Yellow Jaundies* ſtaining the whole Body with a yellow colour, and the Urine with a deep tincture of Red, ſeem (*prima facie*) to prove your Hypotheſis of Humours; yet upon an exact Spagyrical examination, you ſhall find the contrary; for if this tincture of Urine were *à flava bile*, there muſt be found in it by Diſtillation at leaſt ſome bitterneſs, either in the Liquor that comes over, or in the Hypoſtaſis, or *Caput mortuum*; but there is found none, nor could a ſmall quantity of yellow Liquor tinge a large quantity of Urine with a colour deeper than its own. So that we ſay, *Nullus in natura Humor noſter, niſi* Cruor, Latex, & Secundarius. Now ſometimes this *Latex*, ſometimes the *Chyle*, from the Errour and contagion of degenerated Ferments, and pre-diſpoſition of the matter, receives various tinctures, and puts on the diſguiſe of your ſuppoſed Humours. But granting you a Quaternary of Humours, yet we deny them to be truly the efficient cauſes of Diſeaſes, for *manente cauſa non tollitur Effectus*; but very many Diſeaſes we ſee daily cured by *Amulets*, *Plaiſters*, *Laudanums*, *Anodynes*, *Magneticks*, &c. without any evacuation of Humours at all; ſo then the truly Efficient and conjunct Cauſe is Spiritual, and ſuch a Medicine as can quiet the *Archeus*, and reduce it to its natural ſtate, ſhall eaſily cure all theſe Diſtempers, without any regard had to the Purgation, or carrying away of Peccant Humours; for the Juſitous Spirit being ſtrengthened, and the local Ferments reſtored to their proper

Energy,

Energy, your peccant Humours ſhall ſoon, by the power of theſe, be either ſubacted and compell'd into their genuine perfection, or driven out by the ways moſt familiar and eaſie to Nature, truly acknowledged by *Hypocrates* to be *Morborum Curatrix*; and in my Opinion, the reaſon why meer *Galeniſts* ſeldom perform any conſiderable cure in obſtinate Diſeaſes, is for that they wholly proſecute evacuation, and by that means oftentimes diſable Nature, (eſpecially by Phlebotomy) from doing what ſhe would be able oftentimes of her own ſtrength to perform, never aiming primarily and directly (but thus only by accident) at the re-eſtabliſhing of Nature; and no marvel, ſince this way of Healing is not performable without the help of ſuch *Arcana* as are only known to Chymiſts, and of them, only to the *Adepti*, not every vulgar Profeſſor of Chymiſtry. But you urge a neceſſity (in the right Method of Healing) of having reſpect not only to the expulſion of Peccant Humours, but alſo to the extinction of præternatural heat by cooling Medicines, and refocillation of cold, by heating ones; as for Example, in the cure of *Anaſarcha*, which you ſay is from an immoderate refrigeration of the Liver and Veins; of a Fever, which is from a præternatural heat kindled firſt in the Heart, and thence diffuſing it ſelf through the whole Body; of *Bradypepſia* and *Apepſia*, from the coldneſs of the Stomach; of *Boulimia*, from an extraordinary heat of the Stomach ſuddainly precipitating digeſtion, and cauſing almoſt a continual want of aliment; and likewiſe in implicite and compounded Diſeaſes that are contrary to each other, as a hot Liver, and cold Stomach; whatſoever Medicines ſhould by their heating quality be proper in the Cure of *Anaſarcha*, *Bradypepſia*, *Apepſi*, and cold Diſtemper of the Stomach muſt in reſpect of that heat, be quite contrary in a Fever, *Boulimia*, and hot Liver. I anſwer ſtill with the *Adepti*; *That Heat and Cold* (as I ſaid of Hmours) *are not the efficient Cauſes of Diſeaſes, but the Antecedent*, and therefore though their conſideration be Diagnoſtick, yet not Curative, *non calor & frigus* (ſays *Hypocrates*) *ſed acidum, acre, amarum, ponticum*, &c. *ſunt morborum cauſæ.* Heat and cold præternatural, are indeed an effect of the enraged vital Spirit,

which

which being once quieted, the natural temper presently returns; and as for the hot Liver and cold Stomach, which so much puzzles you, that you know not which way to direct your curative intention, as appears by your Method: *Impliciti compositique morbi si dissentiant, nec prorsus huic, nec illi, sed utrique mediocritate quâdam succurendum*: which is in effect but a needless kind of despair of a Cure; whereas I am able to assure you, that if for the future you can find out such a Remedy as can re-invigorate the languishing tone of the Stomach and Liver, restore their deviated Ferments, and appease the *Archeus*, which may be all done with one Medicine, without auy regard had either to the cold of the one, or heat of the other, you shall quickly, safely, and pleasantly cure both; and by the like Method, all other Diseases vulgarly ascribed to Heat and Cold. You attribute Concoction to the Heat of the Stomach, and to the diminution of this Heat, want of Digeston, and all Diseases happening thence; but that Heat is not the efficient Cause of Digestion, seems manifest; For 1. Fishes digest without any actual Heat, and to say that potential sufficeth, is scarcely consonant to Reason, that a thing barely in *potentia*, should *actu jam agere*. 2. There ought to be as many Degrees of Heat specifically different, as there are specifical differences of Concoction, in the Stomachs of Animals of different *species*; for whatsoever is produc'd specifically different, ought likewise to have the efficient Cause of that difference specifically different, otherwise, *Quidlibet generetur à quolibet indifferenter*, which I think no man will affirm. Besides, What degree of Heat must we allow the Stomach of an *Ostrich*, easily digesting Leather, Cloth, and even Nails of Iron? what degree of heat in *Boulimia* for the Digestion of the coursest Food, in so large a quantity, and so fast, that the Stomach is scarcely ever to be satisfi'd? *Riverius* confesseth this cannot possibly be from a more intense Heat, since Meat boiled in a Pot with the strongest Heat that can be invented, and continued for many days, cannot by this means be resolv'd into a Chylous Liquor, much less Bones, as in the Stomach of a Dog in the space of an hour: I know you shift this off to a peculiar faculty, but a faculty cannot act without

out an Inſtrument, ſo that you are conſtrained to flie to the Idioſyncraſie of the part, which you teach to be a certain proportion of firſt qualities; but of all the firſt qualities, Heat is the moſt active, which nevertheleſs, as has been already ſhew'd, cannot have the power of ſo ſuddain a liquation of Meats, ſo that after much ſtruggling, you are at laſt but where you began. We therefore aſcribe the difference of Digeſtions, not to Heat, but to formal proprieties, and the operation of the ſpecifical Ferments.

By what hath been ſaid, your Objections borrow'd out of *Helvetius*, againſt the poſſibility of an univerſal Medicine, ſeem ſufficiently anſwer'd; Nevertheleſs, take this Argument: Health is but one ſimple Homogeneal integrity of Life; Nature but one, but one ſole Spirit, the Governour and Moderator of Life, which alone labours under Diſeaſes, and is alone (if by a powerful Medicine ſufficiently ſtrengthened) able to overcome all Diſeaſes; why then may not one Medicine, ſuch as the Liquor *Alkahest* of *Paracelſus*, his *Tinctura Lili ab Electro Minerali*, his *Tinctura Lili Antimonialis*, his *Mercurius vitæ*, his *Mercurius Diaphoreticus dulcis & fixus*, his *Ignis veneris*, his *Coralinus*, his *Elixir Proprietatis*, or any other equal to theſe, be able to cure all Diſeaſes? and although I am not as yet ſo happy my ſelf, as to be Maſter of any one of theſe, yet in Confirmation of this Hetrodoxical Doctrine, I will undertake (provided the Patients you ſhall aſſign me for the tryal, will faithfully comply in taking the Medicines, and carefully obſerve the order preſcrib'd them) to cure all ſorts of Fevers how malignant and complicated ſoever, with one Medicine; your diſtempers of a hot Liver and cold Stomach, with one Medicine, and for the moſt part, Sanguine, Bilious, Melancholy, and Flegmatick Diſeaſes, (as you eſteem them) with one Medicine, which I hope will make you change you Opinion of the neceſſity of curing Diſeaſes by their contrary Remedies. And as for thoſe obſtinate Diſeaſes, whereof many are eſteemed by you incurable, and the reſt ſeldom or never cured by the vulgar Method; as the Dropſie, the Gout, Stone in the Reins and Bladder, Apoplexy, Coma, Fall-

ling Sickneſs, Madneſs, *Furor uterinus*, Scurvy, French Pox, Small Pox, Griping of the Gutts, of which ſo many hundreds fell the laſt Autumn, *Hyſterica paſſio*, with almoſt the whole Catalogue of Diſeaſes, whereſoever the vital ſpirit, and tone of the part affected, are not ſo weakened, that no Medicine can work its effects; to end the diſpute between us, whether Chymical or *Galenical* Phyſick be the moſt powerful and ſucceſsful, and which of them the moſt worthy of eſteem by you, and all wiſe and unbyaſſed perſons; Let there be ſome of all, or the moſt of theſe Diſeaſes put into my hand as ſoon as you pleaſe, and if you do not find me by the help of Chymical Phyſick, to cure even the hardeſt of them with leſs annoyance, leſs diſturbance, leſs weakening the Spirits and force of the Patient, and incomparably more expedition, ſafety, and certainty, than your ordinary Phyſicians cure light and eaſie Diſtempers, let me be no longer held by you worthy of Credit, or have any place in your eſteem; But if I do, (as by the Grace of God you will certainly find I ſhall) I doubt not, but for the future you will give the preference to Chymical Phyſick, and not think me in this guilty of vanity or oſtentation, which I have made known unto you out of the ſincerity of my heart, inerrable experience, my love of the truth, and (I hope) to the ineſtimable benefit of ſuch as ſhall need and require my help.

But you apprehend Chymical Medicines to be dangerous, as being many of them extracted out of poyſonous Metals and Minerals, as Iron, Copper, Tinn, Lead, Mercury, Antimony, *&c.* and corroſive Salts, as Vitrial, Nitre, Tarter, Bay Salt, *&c.* but you ſeem more eſpecially to be affrighted at Antimony and Mercury; and truly if you mean their vulgar preparations, (which nevertheleſs you commonly make uſe of your ſelves,) ſuch as are the *Vitrum*, and *Flores Antimonii*, *Crocus Metallorum*, the ordinary *Mercurius vita*, Præcipitates and Sublimates, I ſo much abhor them my ſelf, that I deteſt the uſe of them. But I have by me certain preparations out of ♂ and ☿ far more precious than Gold, with which I know how to cure almoſt all curable Diſeaſes in the body of man, and ſo ſafe, that I give them commonly

ly to little Children, without ever having found the leaſt harm or inconvenience in them; ſome of them Purge not at all, but are Diaphoretick, Alexipharmacal, Balſamical, Reſtaurative, and Pacative: and thoſe that do, never cauſe any ſuperpurgation, though the Patient by miſtake ſhould take a double or treble Doſe. Out of ♀ can I make many excellent Medicines, whereof one particularly and eſpecially cures the *P O X*, though ever ſo full of raging pains, *Tophi*, and Ulcerous exetions. Out of Antimony, *Baſilius Valentinus* ſays, he knew how to make above 300 ſeveral preparations, whereof he valued many as more precious and univerſal than potable Gold; Nevertheleſs, eſteeming himſelf yet but a Learner and Searcher into the innumerable Virtues and Proprieties of Antimony. *Quercetan* ſays, there are in ♁ 600 Proprieties. Our moſt Learned *Roger Bacon* made an Oyl out of Antimony, which he affirms to be little inferiour not only in Medicine, but alſo in Tranſmutation of Metals, to the great *Elixir* of the Phyloſophers. Of Antimony *Paracelſus* made ſome of his moſt ſtupendious *Arcana*; as his *Lili Antimoniale*, his *Mercurius vitæ*, with which he could cure all the Diſeaſes in the Body of Man, and ſays of ♁, that as it ſeparates from Gold all Heterogeneous admixture and impurity, ſo doth it from the Body of Man all Diſeaſes. And of *Mercury*, both he and *Van Helmont* made their miraculous *Alkaheſt*. ♀ is certainly the moſt precious Jewel in the whole treaſure of the Mineral Kingdom of Nature, from which alone ☉ it ſelf borrows its perfection. If I would now comunicate to you but what is known to my ſelf that am but a Scholar in the Schools of theſe two great Maſters of Natural Philoſophy of the Virtues and hidden Myſteries of theſe two Minerals, I muſt inſtead of a Letter, write a Volumn, which is at preſent far from my purpoſe and your expectation. Now as to *Saturn*, *Mars*, *Venus*, which you likewiſe apprehend to be dangerous; out of *Saturn* alone, *Paracelſus* profeſſeth himſelf able to cure at leaſt 200 ſeveral Diſeaſes, out of ♀ he made his *Ens Veneris*, one of his greateſt *Arcana*, and ſays of ♁, that he does, *validâ pugnacique manu morbos quamplurimos etiam contumaciſſimos domitare*, hear your *Riverius* in the

 praiſe

praiſe of ♂ in the cure of Hypochondriack Melancholy, Scurvy, moſt affectious of the Liver and Spleen, Ulcers of the Stomach, Green Sickneſs, and many others. *At cæteris omnibus remediis palmam præripit Sal Martis, quod obſtructiones aperit viſcera corroborat, earumque calidam intemperiem emendat*, &c. A certain Phyſician you well knew, got more Fame and Riches than any of his time in this Town, by means of a ſecret operative preparation of Steel, with which he really perform'd many greater and more conſiderable Cures, than others equal to himſelf in all other conſiderations. But you fill me with admiration, that you ſhou d fear the corroſive quality of Vitriol, Tartre, Nitre, and Bay Salt, you may draw a *Menſtruum* out of Bread or Honey, that will diſſolve Flints, and *Uſtadius* out of Honey makes a diſſolvant of Gold; would you therefore be affraid of the uſe of Bread or Honey? you know the juice of Limons diſſolves Pearl and Coral, and yet moſt grateful and friendly to the Stomach; and why ſhould theſe Spirits temper'd with the allay of other milder Liquors, *ad gratam aciditatem*, be more dangerous? Indeed common experience ſhews you the contrary; beſides you ought to conſider the difference between the hard Bodies of Stones and Mettals, and the ſofter Membranes of the Stomach, irrigated continually with a Balſamick vital moiſture: *Aqua fortis* that corrodes Stones and Mettals, whill not penetrate Wax. But to leave you no ground of ſuſpition, I can ſhew you how to make them freed from their corroſive aciditie, pleaſant to Taſte and Smell, and highly exalted in Virtue. But this I confeſs is a great ſecret, eſpecially that of the Volatile Salt of Tarter, of which *Paracelſus* and *Van Helmont* affirm, that it penetrates into the moſt inward and remote parts, cleanſing them from all impurity, *inſtar ſaponis cuncta abſtergens & omnem è venis amurcam detergens, &c.* But though you have oblig'd me to make this juſt vindication of Chymical Phyſick, I would not have you think I either deſpiſe or neglect the excellent uſe of Herbs, which I acknowledge with *Van Helmont*, to be *pentacula Divini amoris*. Out of Animals and Vegetables I can make Medicines that cure the Gout and Dropſy, with that certainty, as ſcarcely to miſs two in twenty,

twenty. But indeed, as is our Method of Healing, ſo are our ways of preparation very different from yours; You in your Decoctions conſume commonly a third part, ſometimes half or more, in which conſumption a great deal of the Spirit and Volatile Salt of the Ingredients, which contains their higheſt Virtues, is evaporated and loſt; of the certainty of this loſs, both your Smell and Taſte will bear you witneſs: We, on the contrary, ſo make our Decoctions, that the whole virtue of the Craſſis of the Plant is preſerv'd without any diminution; I leave it now to your ſelf to judge whether you or we may reaſonably hope for the better ſucceſs in this particular; the like difference is between your Diſtillations and ours; you for the moſt part add water, or at leaſt draw over but the Flegmatick part of the Plant, with ſome very ſmall part of its Sulphur, which gives it ſomething of its natural ſmell and Taſte, leaving nevertheleſs almoſt all its Sulphur, and totally all its Alkalious Salt behind; ſo that your diſtill'd waters carry only the name, little of the virtue of the Plant from which they are drawn: We firſt ſtamp the Hearb, and draw its water, then cohobe it ſo often upon the *caput mortuum*, till we have brought over its Sulphur, and laſtly calcine the remaining *feces*, and with the waters extract its own Salt, and then Circulate them together; and thus are the Mercury, Sulphur, and Salt united, which completes the virtue of the whole Plant, and compar'd to yours, is worthy of the name of an Eſſence; this is indeed laborious and coſtly, but in its effects largely recompenceth both. There remains yet an Objection againſt Chymical Phyſick to be anſwered, which you offer not as your own, but as received by common Report.

That Chymical Phyſick, *though for the preſent it conquer many Diſeaſes held incurable, yet that afterwards it ſhortens the lives of ſuch as have been ſo cured.*

There is indeed ſuch a ſenſeleſs calumny current amongſt Women, and the weaker ſort of Men induſtriouſly diſſeminated amongſt them, by ſome hoping perhaps by this art the better to keep up their own Eſteem and Reputation, which otherwiſe by their abilities they find themſelves not likely to maintain. But

to avoid contention, let common Experience determine this difference between us. For my own particular, I can faithfully assure you, that by Chymical Physick I have cured my self of the Vertigo, and Gout, both in great extremity; it is now 4 years since, and I have not (I bless God) to this day relaps'd again into either, nor have I found any harm, but on the contrary, many benefits to my health by such Medicines, tending in all probability to the prolongation of my life; and if I had not grounded my esteem of Chymical Physick upon good reason and sufficient experience, you might think me mad, to make desperate practices upon my own Life. My Lungs are naturally so tender and weak, that had it not been for Chymical Medicines, I cannot think I could have liv'd to see this day. But inform your self further, and you shall find that those that have been long accustomed to Chymical Physick, have preserv'd their Lives and Health much longer, and more comfortably, than those acquainted only with your Druggs; for consider impartially, how few escape death in contumacious Diseases by means of *Galenical* Medicines, loathsome, tedious, and for the most part ineffectual; and those that do, how slowly do they recover their colour, appetite, and strength, remaining long in continual fear and danger of relapse? such large quantities of Physick as your slow Method requires, so depauperates the vital Spirit, and oppresses Nature, that it may be known many times a year after, from what Method they receiv'd their Cure: whereas we in the same Diseases perfect the Cure quickly, with little Physick, and in small Doses, such as can hardly be nauseous to the nicest and most delicate Stomachs; and in our whole scope, our Method directs us not to enervate (as you do) but to erect deficient Nature, not to extenuate, but reintegrate the languishing Spirit: and is it then likely that Chymical Medicines taken from the hands of a skilful Chymical Physician, appeasing and strengthening the *Archeus*, restoring the Ferments, which alone in their intire vigour, are able to overcome all Diseases, as being the undoubted Authors of transmutation, friendly and comfortable to Nature, should nevertheless shorten Life? besides the evidence of Reason, I can

testify

teſtify out of my own diligent Obſervation and Experience (and that *fido animo*) the contrary. But I believe I need not take much pains to ſatisfie you in this particular, I know you are too ſharp ſighted to be miſs-led by ſuch an *Ignis Fatuus*; on the contrary, I rather believe you inclinable to acquaint your ſelf fully with the Theory, and manual operations of Chymiſtry, which though it coſt you (as it hath done me) much Time, Sweat, and Money, yet if you prove equally ſucceſsful, I dare promiſe it ſhall never give you cauſe to repent you: for (I ſpeak it without boaſting) I have by the help of this Art eaſily and quickly cured Diſeaſes quite deſperate in the hands of very able and experienced *Galenical* Phyſicians. Truly were not Chymical Phyſick incomparably more powerful and ſafe, than *Galenical*, I do not ſee how I could excuſe my ſelf in leaving at any time, the trodden, ſmooth, and eaſie paths of the vulgar or *Galenical* Method, in which I am graduated as well as you, to follow thoſe of the Chymical, painful, coſtly, ſublime, and ſo ſecret, that but a few have ever rightly underſtood:

——————*pauci quos æquus amavit*
Jupiter, *hoc potuêre*————————

At the worſt can be ſaid; ſurely he that underſtands both Phyſicks, is likely to perform more than he that underſtands but one; but I muſt not tranſgreſs the limits of a Letter, let what has been ſaid ſuffice for the preſent, till I Print my *Synopſis Medico-Chymica*, which is almoſt finiſhed, and I ſhall be ready at our next meeting to give you further ſatisfaction in any thing: In the mean time I pray do me that right to believe, that what I have ſaid in Vindication of Chymical Phyſick, hath been without the leaſt animoſity, or intention of prejudice to the Perſon or Practice of any man, purely in defence of the Truth, and that whatſoever I have undertaken to do my ſelf in my own particular, the better to confirm you, I will by the Grace of God, whenſoever you ſhall offer me the occaſion, faithfully make

make good; and further, that I ſhall unalterably remain upon all Tryals.

Sir,

Your faithful Friend

and Servant

G. A.

Silver-ſtreet near
Bloomesbury-Market
London. March 4.
1669.

F I N I S.

$= \underset{+}{h} = \underset{+}{x}$

Phrenex
Med. Lect. 9.
Acton. 1. 2
Alchemy.
Becher